

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8397

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES

AMCONSUL IZMIR

USINFO WASHDC

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR

USMISSION NATO

USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR

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SUBJECT: TURKISH PRESS REACTION TO DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS

REF: (A) ANKARA 5795 (DTG 031140Z AUG 77), (B) FIBS TEL AVIV

(DTG 031106Z AUG 77)

1. INITIAL REACTIONS OF THE TURKISH PRESS AND PUBLIC TO THE
ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS WERE GENERALLY
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MARKED BY A MIXTURE OF HOPE AND CAUTION ABOUT THE FUTURE CON-
SEQUENCES. TURKISH PRESS AUGUST 4 QUOTED MAN-ON-THE-STREET
COMMENTS SUCH AS, "THE ENEMY OF TURKEY IS DEAD" AND "PERHAPS
THERE CAN BE PEACE NOW." BUT THE MORE CONSIDERED VIEW, WHICH IS
GIVEN STRONGER PLAY, IS THAT THE DEATH OF MAKARIOS USHERS
IN A NEW AND UNCERTAIN ERA.

2. HOW THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY SHOULD RESPOND TO THE SITUATION

CREATED BY THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT MAKARIOS RECEIVED CAUTIOUS TREATMENT IN PRESS REPORTS. HASAN ESAT ISIK, REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) DEP. SEC GEN AND A FORMER FONMIN AND DEFMIN, IS REPORTED IN MILLIYET TO HAVE SAID THAT IT WAS A MISTAKE FOR THE GOT TO PERMIT MAKARIOS TO RETURN TO CYPRUS AFTER THE 1974 COUP, AND THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT (OF THAT TIME) BEARS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EVENTS WHICH FOLLOWED. ISIK ADDED THAT THERE MAY BE ANOTHER MAKARIOS WAITING TO COME TO POWER IN CYPRUS, AND IN ORDER TO FORCE THE GREEK CYPRIOTS TO ACT WITH COMMON SENSE, THE GOT MUST HAVE A DETERMINED AND CONSISTENT POLICY. SENSATIONALIST GUNAYDIN REPORTS THAT UNIDENTIFIED MFA SOURCES SAY THEY DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MAKARIOS' DEPARTURE WILL MAKE THE SEARCH FOR A SETTLEMENT EASIER, NOTING THAT "ONE MUST NOT BE OPTIMISTIC, BECAUSE THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE IN THE VIEWS HELD BY MAKARIOS AND THOSE HELD BY ATHENS." GUNAYDIN CONCLUDES: "DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE CLOSELY FOLLOWED AND THE SITUATION EVALUATED." TURKISH CYPRIOT LEADER DENKTASH IS QUOTED AS SAYING, "LET'S WAIT AND SEE WHAT WILL HAPPEN."

3. EDITORIAL COMMENTARY GENERALLY REFLECTS THE VIEW THAT THE DEATH OF MAKARIOS WILL NOT MAKE A CYPRUS SOLUTION EASIER. EDITORIAL WRITERS AGREE THAT WHILE MAKARIOS WAS AN ENEMY OF TURKS, HIS PLACE AS UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED LEADER OF THE GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY CANNOT BE TAKEN. MANY COMMENT FAVORABLY ON HIS ROLE IN NEGOTIATION OF THE LONDON-ZURICH AGREEMENTS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT CYPRUS. EDITORIAL OPINION ON THE QUESTION OF SUCCESSION GENERALLY CONCLUDES THAT MAKARIOS WAS AN UNCLASSIFIED

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UNUSUAL LEADER WHO ROSE FROM POOR, VILLAGE ORIGINS TO BECOME A MAN KNOWN AND TALKED ABOUT BY EVERYONE FROM THE LOWLIEST TURKISH VILLAGER TO THE LEADERS OF THE SUPERPOWERS. WHILE MOST EDITORIALISTS AGREE THAT MAKARIOS WAS AN ENEMY OF TURKS, THEY ADD THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW IF HIS SUCCESSOR WILL BE BETTER OR WORSE FROM TURKEY'S POINT OF VIEW. THE PRESS SPECULATES WIDELY ON THE POSSIBILITY OF CIVIL WAR BREAKING OUT IN THE GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY AS COMPETING CANDIDATES SEEK TO REPLACE MAKARIOS. MOST PAPERS INDICATE THAT CLERIDES AND LYSSARIDES ARE THE LEADING CONTENDERS, AND ONE EDITORIALIST COMMENTS THAT MAKARIOS DESTROYED CLERIDES POLITICALLY BECAUSE HE WAS TOO FRIENDLY TOWARD TURKEY.

4. THE PRESS HAS QUICKLY PICKED UP THE QUESTION OF THE LEGITIMACY OF MAKARIOS' SUCCESSOR AS PRESIDENT OF CYPRUS. MOST PAPERS CARRY THE FULL TEXT OF TFSC PRIME MINISTER, NEJAT KONUK'S STATEMENT (REF B). HIS REMARKS INCLUDE THE STATEMENT: "I WOULD LIKE TO SAY CLEARLY AND CATEGORICALLY NOW THAT THE LEADER TO BE ELECTED WILL BE THE LEADER OF ONLY THE GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO ACCEPT ALLEGATIONS BY A NEW GREEK CYPRIOT LEADER THAT HE IS ALSO THE LEADER OF THE CYPRUS REPUBLIC." DENKTASH IS ALSO PROMINENTLY REPORTED BY SOME TURKISH PAPERS TO HAVE SAID THAT THE TURK CYPRIOTS WILL NOT RECOGNIZE

MAKARIOS' SUCCESSOR AS PRESIDENT OF THE STATE. GUNDUZ OKCUN, THE INTERNATIONAL LAW PROFESSOR CHOSEN BY BULENT ECEVIT AS FOREIGN MINISTER IN THE GOVERNMENT WHICH FAILED TO WIN A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN EARLY JULY, IS QUOTED AT LENGTH IN MILLIYET ON THE THESIS THAT THE CYPRUS PRESIDENCY IS NOW VACANT AND A NEW PRESIDENT CANNOT BE ELECTED WITHOUT THE VOTES OF THE TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY. HE REPORTEDLY DECLARED THAT ANY PERSON SELECTED BY ONLY THE GREEK CYPRIOTS CANNOT REPRESENT THE STATE; HE CAN ONLY BE THE LEADER OF THE GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY. AN UNSIGNED EDITORIAL IN LEFTIST CUMHURIYET ASSERTS THAT THE CONSTITUTION OF CYPRUS IS NO LONGER OPERATIVE AND MAKARIOS' SUCCESSOR WILL ONLY BE LEADER OF THE GREEK CYPRIOTS.

5. SO FAR THE GOT HAS ISSUED NO OFFICIAL STATEMENT CONCERNING MAKARIOS' DEATH. HOWEVER, RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT, WHO WAS PRIMIN
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DURING THE 1974 INTERVENTION IN CYPRUS, ISSUED A STATEMENT SAYING: "MAKARIOS' LEADERSHIP CERTAINLY HAD AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY. I EXPRESS MY CONDOLENCES TO THE GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY FOR ITS LOSS IN MAKARIOS' DEATH. I HOPE THE TWO COMMUNITIES IN CYPRUS WILL ALWAYS LIVE IN PEACE."
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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